

TENNESSEE SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY

Communication & Education

Internal

Committing to environmental sustainability institutionally means creating a culture of environmental sustainability within your staff and workforce. Through creating this culture, we can begin to consider and prioritize environmental sustainability as part of the backbone of operations and maintenance, purchasing decisions, interfacing with guests, and more. Taking small steps to discuss, consider, and train staff on environmental sustainability topics can lead to meaningful shifts in culture. Instilling this culture at your property might not happen overnight, but each step can bring you closer to your goal.

This resource describes some of the challenges and best practices to guide facility managers and/or staff in creating a mindset of environmental sustainability through communication and education strategies. Each of these strategies is intended for internal implementation. Please see the "Communication and Education – External" resource for suggestions relating to environmental sustainability engagement with guests.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Boost employee moral. By demonstrating a commitment to reducing your facility's environmental footprint and providing leadership opportunities to staff members. Some companies also find that their employee morale and/or work productivity increases with some implemented sustainable initiatives like improved indoor air quality and natural lighting.

Positively impact your bottom line. Many environmental sustainability initiatives provide a cost savings co-benefit.

Become aware of innovative products and technologies. This can set your business apart by considering environmental sustainability in daily decision-making.

Foster a sense of creativity. By encouraging environmental sustainability goals and imaginative solutions to challenges that arise.

THIS GUIDE IS APPLICABLE...

FOR

- ✓ Food & Beverage
- ✓ Travel & Tourism
- ✓ Lodging
- ✓ Recreation

TO

- ✓ Management
- ✓ Event Planning
- ✓ Food Operations
- Housekeeping
- Maintenance & Operations
- Front of the House

BEST PRACTICES

1

Create a green team. A Green Team is a set of staff members who volunteer to develop and lead initiatives relating to environmental sustainability. Encouraging the formation of a Green Team can provide leadership opportunities to staff and allows staff who are passionate about the topic to meaningfully engage in environmental sustainability projects. Consider building a Green Team that includes staff of diverse backgrounds and that represents a cross-sector of the facility's total staff. If feasible, allow the Green Team to present on their work to managers regularly and communicate transparently with the rest of the staff.

2

Build an environmental sustainability toolkit. As environmental sustainability projects or initiatives are undertaken, document these projects and begin to compile a toolkit or other resources dedicated to this topic for your facility. Make sure to include things that worked, things that need improvement, and things that were not the right fit for your facility. By compiling these lessons and resources into a single spot, staff at all levels can review the history of sustainability efforts and consider ideas for new engagements. Ideally this toolkit should be available to all employees.

3

Incorporate environmental sustainability into employee training. Employees at every level should be meaningfully trained on the facility's environmental sustainability practices, initiatives, goals, and procedures. This training is particularly important for new employees and should include review of current sustainability initiatives and mention of a Green Team, if applicable. If part of the corporate culture, consider mentioning the facility's commitment to environmental sustainability as part of employee recruitment. Be sure this training is offered in languages that are accessible to staff.

4

Regularly discuss environmental sustainability. One of the best ways to ensure sustainability remains on the minds of all staff is by regularly discussing these topics during staff meetings or events. Think about inviting an outside speaker or asking the Green Team to lead a discussion on a pertinent issue in sustainability, review the facility's environmental sustainability goals, or discuss a current event related to the environment. Regardless of the format, the act of discussing with all staff will help engrain sustainability into corporate culture.

5

Develop and maintain environmental sustainability goals. Creating a set of facility sustainability goals will help guide projects and initiatives and provide a benchmark for measuring success. Developing, and regularly updating, these goals can also institutionalize a commitment to sustainability. If appropriate, these goals may be shared publicly to share a facility's commitment to the environment.

RESOURCES

GreenBiz

- [10 Best Practices for Building Green Teams](#)
- [Why Getting Serious About Sustainability Needs to Start with Training](#)

Green Globe

- [Sustainability Leadership for Hotel & Tourism Professionals](#)

Green Hotelier

- [Environmental Awareness and Training](#)

University of Pennsylvania

- [Green Team Guide](#)